

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 01219 180042Z
ACTION NEA-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFPR, TS, US
SUBJ: LETTER TO PRESIDENT FROM MEANY

REF: STATE 031149

1. DURING A TALK YESTERDAY WITH HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR., NOW SPECIAL ADVISER TO HIS FATHER, HE MENTIONED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD COMMENTED TO HIM TEN MINUTES BEFORE MY ARRIVAL AT THE PALACE ON HIS SURPRISE THAT AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY HAD NOT YET SENT IN A WIRE OR LETTER EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR UGTT LEADER HABIB ACHOUR, AS HEADS OF SO MANY OTHER LABOR ORGANIZATIONS HAD. HE ASKED WHAT HAD HAPPENED AS A RESULT OF THE IRVING BROWN VISIT JANUARY 29/30.

2. I TOLD BOURGUIBA, JR. THAT AFL-CIO HAD APPARENTLY CHOSEN ON IRVING BROWN'S RECOMMENDATION TO EXPRESS ITS UNHAPPINESS OVER THE FATE OF THE UGTT LEADERSHIP DIRECTLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER RATHER THAN TO PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND HAD RECOMMENDED THAT I BE INSTRUCTED TO ASSOCIATE USG'S GRAVE DISPLEASURE WITH THAT OF AFL-CIO AND TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT ACHOUR AND THE UGTT LEADERS UNDER DETENTION WOULD RECEIVE A FAIR AND PUBLIC TRIAL. I ADDED THAT, ALTHOUGH I HAD RECEIVED AS YET NO INSTRUCTIONS TO
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MAKE SUCH A DEMARCHE, I COULD RECALL READILY THE TEXT OF PRESIDENT MEANY'S MESSAGE.

3. BOURGUIBA, JR. SAID HE WOULD CONVEY THE SENSE OF MEANY'S MESSAGE TO HIS FATHER AT LUNCH AND THAT I COULD CONSIDER THE DEMARCHE AS HAVING BEEN MADE. I COULD INFORM WASHINGTON, HE SAID, THAT HABIB ACHOUR AND HIS ACCUSED

COLLEAGUES WOULD RECEIVE A FAIR TRIAL, OPEN TO ALL OBSERVERS,
BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT COURT. TO MY QUERY HE DECLINED TO
SPECULATE ON HOW SOON THE TRIAL WOULD TAKE PLACE.

4. COMMENT: THIS SEEMS TO PUT TO REST RUMORS THAT HAVE
BEEN CIRCULATING HERE THAT ACHOUR AND FRIENDS MIGHT BE LET OFF
WITH OUT A TRIAL.
MULCAHY

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